



Clean Water Indiana 2022 SWCD-Led Competitive Grants Guidance

Executive Summary: The Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Grant Program (IC 14-32-8-5) utilizes the Clean Water Indiana Fund to Support Indiana conservation groups (nonprofits or units or subdivisions of government), in cooperation with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, in efforts to address the priority concerns of the State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) business plan. The SSCB is accepting competitive proposals for targeted projects up to three years in length. The Clean Water Indiana fund is administered by the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) under the direction of the SSCB (IC 14-32-8-6).

Application Process: Applications are submitted online through the Indiana Grant Management System (GMS). A request for a GMS account is required. Please contact cleanwaterindiana@isda.in.gov to request an account.

All applications will be scored and ranked alongside the SWCD led proposals for CWI funding consideration. The CWI grants committee's funding recommendations for both SWCD-led and Non-SWCD led projects will be presented to the full SSCB at the October SSCB meeting.

Application Deadline: The application must be submitted by **September 9, 2021 at 4 pm EDT**. By submitting the application, the lead SWCD certifies that each partnering districts have agreed to the terms outlined in the application.

Upon submission of the application, if a pdf copy is needed please request a copy here: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/2a1a2557c61b4e688b028032c37697a4>

Eligible Applicants: Applications can be submitted by any SWCD in the State of Indiana. However, only one application is permitted per project and must be submitted by the lead SWCD. SWCDs may be lead on only one application in the 2021 grant cycle. Lead districts must be up to date on all CWI reporting. Projects relating to urban practices that will reduce sediment and nutrient are eligible. Conservation practices and lab analysis of soil and water that are components of research projects are eligible.

Ineligible Projects: The 2021 CWI grant program cannot be used to fund research equipment. Cost-sharing is also not allowed on specific practices that an entity is required to install to comply with a state or local rule or ordinance. *Example: CWI funds cannot be used to meet MS4 requirements unless the proposed use of funds goes above and beyond the requirement outlined in the MS4 permit's Storm Water Quality Management Plan.*

Proposal Logistics: This grant opportunity is competitive. Proposals can be for any amount that would accomplish the project described. A lead district must be selected to serve as the grantee to receive and administer the grant. However grant funds can be shared between districts through cooperative agreements locally. The grant proposal must document how the grant funds will address at least two of the State priority resource concerns referenced in the State Soil Conservation Board's (SSCB's) Business Plan adopted in 2020. Proposals that outline how CWI funds will leverage additional funding from other sources as well as engage other partners are strongly encouraged. CWI project proposals that will be in tandem with ongoing projects are encouraged. *Example: CWI funds might be used to add technical assistance to help implement sediment and nutrient reduction practices cost-shared through a LARE or 319 project.*

Project Dates: All 2022 Clean Water Indiana Grant projects shall take no longer than three full years to complete. Projects will start on January 1, 2022 and must be finished and all funds spent by December 31, 2024.

Project Description: The proposal must identify the current nonpoint source water quality concern(s) in the selected district(s). The proposal must also identify how addressing this resource concern pertains to both the SWCD business plan(s) and the SSCB business plan.

Partnerships: Each application must state clearly what each partner and participating district will be contributing to the proposed project (i.e. outreach, professional assistance, estimated funds, etc.) Partnering districts and organizations must be identified with a point of contact for the project, their contact information, and an explanation of any anticipated cash or in kind match from the partner.

Conservation Practices: Conservation practices and structural measures shall follow NRCS Field Office Technical Guide where applicable. New technologies not currently in the technical guide may be implemented if reviewed and concurred in by a technical representative of the Conservation Implementation Teams (CIT) or their designee. *Please note that pollinator plantings must be free of species that are noxious, invasive, and/or all amaranth. To verify that seed mixes are free of these species, a district MUST request the seed lab card from the distributor. For more information, please contact your DSS.* For cost-share practices, CWI funds may be used to pay up to a maximum of 75% of the total conservation practice cost. However, this also applies to cover crops, with 25% of the cost being the responsibility of the landowner and a maximum dollar cap at \$20/ac. If applying for cost share, please describe the process you will implement to select grant recipients. Priority will be given to projects who demonstrate a strategic process for managing cost share dollars and prioritizing first-time users.

Funding Restrictions: Proposals must fall within the funding context allowed under the Clean Water Indiana Law (IC 14-32-8). The law prohibits funds to be used for food, food related paper products, office equipment or district self-promotional materials (i.e. mugs, t-shirts, pens, etc.) CWI grant dollars shall not be utilized to pay directly for employee benefits, such as retirement, health insurance, paid time off, taxes, etc. If CWI competitive grant dollars are being utilized to fund a staff position, once the funds are disbursed to a staff person, they may utilize their stipend/wages as they see fit. This only pertains to CWI competitive grant dollars and not to the \$10,000 CWI statutory match.

Match Requirements: A 50 percent cash and/or in-kind match is required. Match contributions can be federal, state, and/or local sources including such things as landowner costs, staff time, supervisor time, equipment use, purchase, rental, etc. Proposals that request funds for staffing require a 25% cash or in-kind match for the staffing component. *Example: District A submits a \$10,000 for solely a staff position. District A's proposal requires a match of \$2,500. District B submits a \$10,000 proposal that includes \$5,000 for staff and \$5,000 for cost share. Proposal B is required to have \$3,750 match.* The match is applicable only if directly related to the purpose of the proposed project. The grants committee may give preference to cash match rather than in kind during the scoring process. Grant proposals must use the match standards outlined below to develop their project budget. State employee time may not be used as match.

Match Standards: (all figures are per hour of project work)

ICP Staff/SWCD supervisors (including associates) \$25*

Landowner Time: \$25

Professional Services: \$25

Student/Intern/Volunteer: \$10

*ICP match rates were calculated from publicly available data in Gateway and public transparency portals.

Any landowner contribution toward the remaining portion of cost share practices should be counted as cash match.

In general, time spent working on the project should be considered in-kind match; whereas money would be considered cash match.

Leveraging Funds: SWCDs are encouraged to partner with traditional and non-traditional organizations/agencies at the local, state, and federal level to leverage additional funds for their project/initiative. Projects which add to the percent cost-share/incentive rate offered through another program are prohibited. *Example: A project where CWI funds are used for cost share and 319 funds for technical assistance are acceptable. A project where CWI and 319 funds are both used to give producers a larger cost share amount is prohibited.*

Scoring Procedures: The SSCB grants committee will utilize a scoring sheet to aid in ranking the proposals. The SSCB may use discretion when awarding grant funds.

Process of Payments: All funded SWCDs are required to register as a bidder with the State of Indiana. Instructions for registration can be obtained from the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA). Once the proposal is approved by the SSCB, ISDA will issue an electronic contract to the grantee. Grantees must return their electronically signed contract to ISDA within 30 days of receipt in order to receive their funds. Funds must be utilized in a timely manner. Up to 50 percent of grant funding may be disbursed at the beginning of the grant, if justified by the applicant in their proposal and approved by the SSCB. All other payments will be made as reimbursement 45 days in arrears upon receipt of an updated report and claim that is submitted on GMS. *Please note that reimbursement claims may require updated financial reporting, a claim voucher and a Quickbooks or similar financial report showing that requested funds have been paid by the lead entity.*

10% of the grant funds must be left before submitting the final report.

Reporting Requirements: Financial and project status reports will be required for the duration of the grant and a final report will be due at the end of the grant. The grant reporting forms will be provided. This report must be completed semi-annually (every 6 months) and summarize the outcomes and achievements of the project. These reports will be due 30 days following the anniversary date of the grant and are cumulative. *Example: grants that begin on January 1st will have reports due January 31st and July 31st.* Tracking of conservation practice implementation (following FOTG standards) must be reported through Conservation Link Share point conservation project tracking system spreadsheet shall be completed by the 1st Friday of the quarter.

All in-kind must be reported in full for each grant update. In-kind cannot be accounted for at a later report. Any state employee's time may not be counted as in-kind match.

Grant Reviews: ISDA routinely visits with its grantees to ensure projects and grants are proceeding as intended and offer guidance and support if needed. Each year, ISDA will strategically select grants to review. These reviews can include open grants and grants that have been completed in the last three years. Upon completion of a review, ISDA will send a summary of results to all districts involved in the project and their board(s). If found during formal review or routine reporting checks, failure to make progress on the project or report progress as specified in the grant agreement will be noted in a project's file and may jeopardize a district's ability to receive competitive grant funds in future cycles.

Questions:

For assistance please contact your District Support Specialist (DSS).

<i>Northeast:</i>	Jennifer Thum	jthum@isda.in.gov	(260) 341-6966
<i>Northeast:</i>	Katie Secrest	katie.secrest@usda.gov	(260) 356-6816
<i>Northwest:</i>	Geneva Tyler	gt Tyler@isda.in.gov	(317) 518-4036
<i>South:</i>	Laura Fribley	lfribley@isda.in.gov	(812) 595-5641
<i>Southeast:</i>	Tara Wesseler-Henry	twesseler@isda.in.gov	(765) 745-0306
<i>Southwest:</i>	Nathan Stoelting	nstoelting@isda.in.gov	(812) 320-9873

Deadlines that SWCDs must meet to be eligible to be lead on an application for CWI 2022

- Election Committee Report: November 1, 2020
- Recommendation for Supervisor Appointment: November 1, 2020
- Nominee for Election: December 1, 2020
- Annual Meeting Held: March 31, 2021
- Election held at Annual Meeting: March 31, 2021
- Annual Financial Report and Audit Form/Page 2 of AFR: March 31, 2021
- Certification of Election of Supervisors: Within 7 days of election

The items are not specified in district law but are considered essential for district operations and will be considered for CWI 2021. These questions will appear as a self-assessment on the CWI application.

- Updated SharePoint Directories: Within 30 days of changes
- The district has a current business plan.
- District Staff or supervisors participated in the fall/winter 2020/2021 cover crop transects.
- District has applied for a grant other than CWI in the last 3 years and how many.